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**NEWS RELEASE**

**Bolt it down: preparing your home for an earthquake**

SEATTLE — After so many families lost their homes from Hurricane Katrina, how ready are Northwest families for a Katrina-type event here: an earthquake? While the Puget Sound has three different types of quakes (deep, shallow, Subduction Zone) that can all produce damage to homes, it is a shallow earthquake on the Seattle or Tacoma Faults that will cause the most destruction to this region's homes and livelihood.

Over 250,000 wood-frame homes in the Puget Sound were built before modern earthquake codes were changed. A pre-1980 home was not built with earthquakes in mind.

What does this mean? They are not bolted, or properly bolted, to the foundation which can cause a house to slide off the foundation during an earthquake. Other reinforcement also needs to occur as these homes were constructed using gravity to hold them in place – moderate ground shaking can weaken the structure causing major damage and possibly collapse. This would be in addition to all the damaged belongings and injuries to people inside the home.

So, what can a homeowner do? Contact the Regional Home Retrofit line at 1-877-2-BOLT-IT to sign-up for a FREE 2-hour homeowner class that will help residents take the next step. After attending the class, homeowners can either do their own retrofit, borrowing tools from the Tool Lending Library, or hire one of the trained contractors who completed extensive 6-hour training. There are reduced-rate, expedited permits to ensure quality control, no matter who finishes the retrofit. The result is a safer, earthquake-strengthened home.

“The idea of an earthquake can be overwhelming,” stated Seattle Emergency Management Director Barb Graff, “so Regional Home Retrofit is providing a clear and easy way to assist the community to take action today.”

Seattle Project Impact, a public-private partnership building disaster resistant communities since 1997, has made Regional Home Retrofit available to 20 cities/counties in the area. Over 800 houses have already been retrofitted.

While an earthquake can have devastating impacts, residents can lessen their risk by taking easy, preparedness actions. Seattle Project Impact, lead by Seattle's Office of Emergency Management, offers additional information and resources to protect area homes, families, schools and businesses.

For more information on the Regional Home Retrofit Program, classes or materials, please call **1-877-2-BOLT-IT** or visit [www.seattle.gov/projectimpact](http://www.seattle.gov/projectimpact/)

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